

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Legends of the Court: Celebrating American Basketball Heroes

### Short Answer Key

1. Michael Jordan's impact on popular culture is considered immeasurable because of his role in popularizing basketball globally through his incredible skills, charisma, and the iconic Air Jordan sneaker line. He became a global phenomenon and inspired a new generation of fans and athletes.
2. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's signature shot is the skyhook, an unblockable one-handed shot with a high release point. This shot allowed him to score consistently and contributed significantly to his career point total. The skyhook is often regarded as one of the most effective and difficult-to-defend shots in basketball history.
3. Magic Johnson played a key role in the "Showtime" era of the Los Angeles Lakers as the team's primary ball-handler and playmaker. He was known for his exceptional passing skills, which made his teammates better and contributed to the Lakers' fast-paced and entertaining style of play.
4. The rivalry between Larry Bird and Magic Johnson is significant because it helped popularize the NBA during the 1980s. Their contrasting styles, Bird's deadly shooting and Johnson's exceptional passing, created intense competition and captivated fans. Their rivalry also featured memorable clashes in NBA Finals, further elevating the league's profile.
5. Bill Russell contributed to the Boston Celtics' success with his exceptional shot-blocking and rebounding abilities, leading the team to 11 NBA championships. He also played a crucial role in the civil rights movement, advocating for equality and justice, and becoming an influential figure in the fight against racial discrimination.

